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Subject: Texas will spend \$4.5 million to 'monitor, locate and catalog' earthquakes larger than 2.0M

Texas will spend \$4.5 million to 'monitor, locate and catalog' earthquakes larger than 2.0M



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Earthquake country

Ground shaking near Venus marks the fifth earthquake in North Texas since 2008. “We should understand that parts of Texas are in earthquake country now,” said I. Petersen, an expert with the U.S. Geological Survey.

1. Location: Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport

Dates: Halloween night 2008 to May 2009

Biggest quake: 3.3 magnitude

2. Location: Cleburne

Dates: June 2009 to June 2010

Biggest quake: 2.8 magnitude

3. Location: Reno ar

Dates: November 20

Biggest quake: 3.6 m

4. Location: Irving a

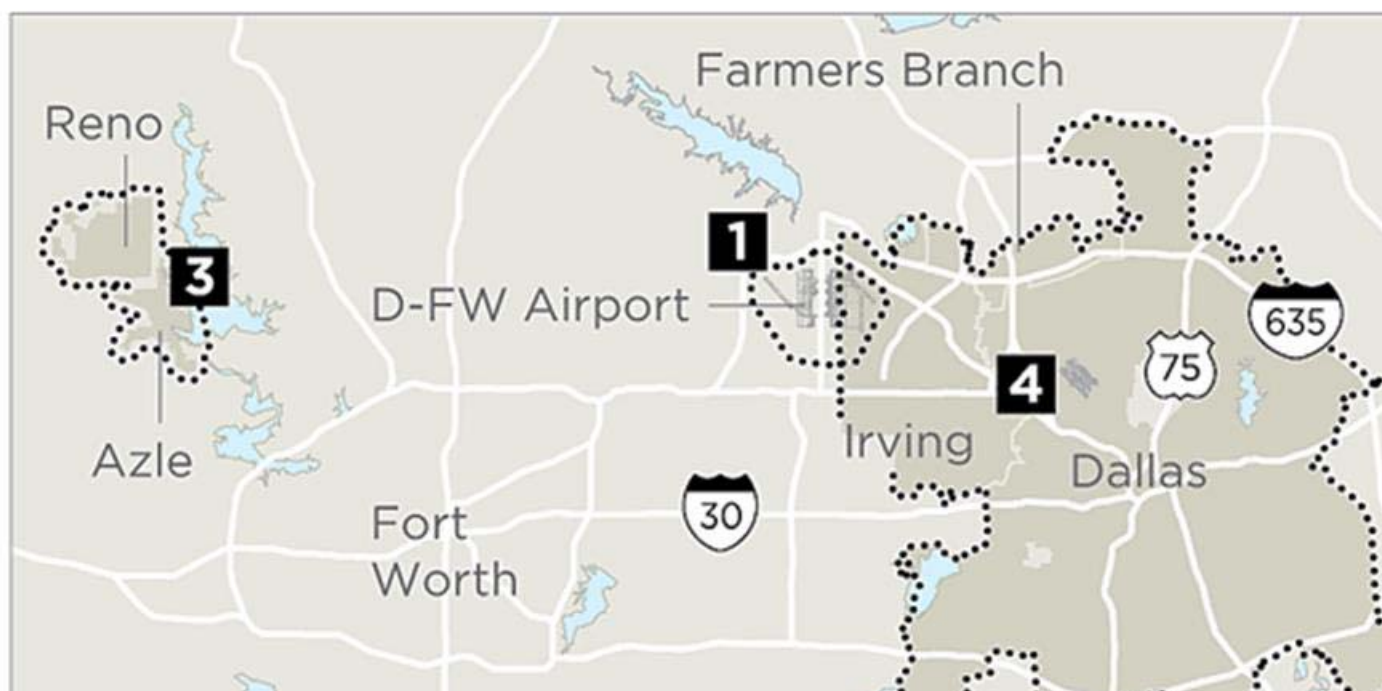
Dates: April 2014 to

Biggest quake: 3.6 m

5. Location: Venus a

Dates: 2009 to present

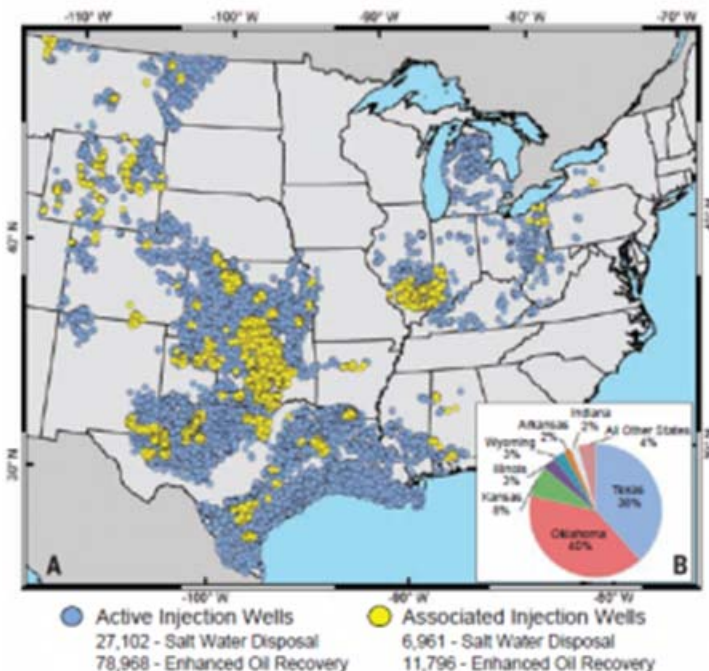
Biggest quake: 4 m



According to the U.S. Geological Survey it's been just nine days since Dallas' most recent earthquake — a 2.3-magnitude tremor on Manana Drive near Stemmons Freeway, just south of the city-owned soccer fields at Moneygram Park, that rumbled through with nary a mention at 8:34 in the morning. Two days later, during the wee small hours of June 15, Venus had its own 2.3M quake — not quite the 4-pointer that ranks as North Texas' biggest ever, but that's beside the point. In case wondering if the earth has stopped moving under our feet, no, it has not.

That's why Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has signed off on spending \$4.47 million to fund what's known as the TexNet Seismic Monitoring Program, which will involve planting at least 22 seismometers in "key locations" around the state. A release from the state's Bureau of Economic Geology, which is operated out of the University of Texas at Austin, doesn't specify where they'll be installed. Messages have been left for director Scott Tinker and spokesman Mark Blount, and we'll update accordingly.

"The mission of TexNet is to provide transparent access to data and information regarding the understanding of earthquake activity in Texas, both natural and potentially induced by human activity," says the release from UT. The seismometers will "monitor, locate and catalog" quakes that register 2.0M and larger "to improve the state's ability to rapidly investigate ongoing earthquake sequences in Texas," says the release. "Of particular importance are those earthquakes larger than magnitude 3.0 in or near urban areas, or in locations where ongoing human activities might be influencing earthquake activity."



All the injection wells in this part of the world

At an earthquake hearing in Austin last month, SMU seismologist Brian Stump, part of the team studying the state's quakes, said it's important to detect small earthquakes, because they can predict

larger ones. “What we find is that if we have 10 magnitude-3 [quakes], we might expect one magnitude-4 [quake],” he said. It’s those 4-pointers that can cause structural damage.

Until we hear back from Tinker, all we have to go on his prepared statement: “We’re very grateful to Gov. Abbott and the state Legislature for entrusting us with the task of investigating seismic activity in Texas in a transparent way, and for providing the tools to gather new data and produce unbiased research that will help guide decision-makers as they contemplate future policy regarding these events. We’re excited to work together with our academic, industry, state and federal government partners to advance seismic understanding in Texas.”

Studies have shown a decided link between oil and gas production and the “unprecedented” rise in quakes in North Texas and Oklahoma. Energy companies and the Railroad Commission of Texas keep insisting that’s not true.